



ASPIRA, Inc. of Pennsylvania

2726 N. 6th Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19133
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Oscar Cardona

Board Chairperson

María D. Quiñones-Sánchez

Executive Director

Progress Report

ASPIRA, Inc. of Pennsylvania

ASPIRA National Board Meeting
February 1998
Newark, New Jersey

Submitted by:

María D. Quiñones-Sánchez
Executive Director

Progress Report

for

ASPIRA, Inc. of Pennsylvania
February, 1998

Introduction

ASPIRA has made tremendous progress this past year. With the support of the Board of Directors, staff, students and our friends we have embarked on the task of putting ASPIRA back on the educational map.

Our funding is stable and in fact we had an operating surplus of nearly \$60,000. This does not include the nearly \$100,000 in deficit payments we made last year.

Needless to say our deficit reduction plan is ahead of schedule. If activity continues at this level we will have resolved 90% of our deficit by the end of the year. We began with a deficit of over \$600,000 eighteen months ago.

At the same time we have experienced program expansion. However, we will curtail any new initiatives until the implementation of the Hostos project.

Development

1. Awarded a Charter School which we project will have a \$770,000 budget its first year and serve 120 students and will expand to serve 200 students in two years. See attached Hostos Charter School package. The project will require 2.5 million-dollar purchase/rehab start-up capital. We are in negotiations with CoreStates/First Union for financing.
2. Awarded a \$150,000 endowment by CoreStates Bank. The endowment will be paid \$50,000 a year for the next three years. I requested the endowment policy from our national office and information from the Philadelphia Foundation of their endowment management services.
3. We had a very successful annual Gala where we netted nearly \$40,000.
4. The ASPIRA (Alumni) Ambassador's held their first retreat last month. Lydia can report on the retreat. ETS has provided \$9,000 of support to this endeavor.
5. We have been able to secure a \$50,000 operating grant for the continuation of our evening school. This is the last year of a three-year funding cycle.
6. We were able to secure over \$70,000 for our ASPIRACorps match from the school district.
7. We were awarded an additional \$50,000 to expand our Next Step Center to serve the Kensington and Edison Cluster for a total of \$150,000 per year. Both clusters serve the majority of Latino students. We are reapplying for the continuation grant for next year. This is part of the Children Achieving Challenge Reform monies.

Advocacy/Collaborations

- We continue to collaborate with many advocacy and community efforts.

Finance

1. We are finally preparing for our audits. Roger was expected this week, unfortunately his wife went into premature labor. We expect to complete 95-96 next week and 96-97 by April 30th.
2. We were able to settle our City tax debt and reduce the debt with them by nearly 100%. This cuts our deficit by 40%.
3. We are in the process of starting an "offer and comprise" with the IRS.
4. We have experienced dramatic cuts in national programs. In fact we have made a decision to phase out national programs, except ASPIRA Corps and APPLP. This of course impacts the national office and their budget. We will work with them on this.
5. We are in the process of settling the insurance claim with the City. ASPIRA's claim totals over \$128,000.
6. We have begun a reasonable payment plan with the National Office for our operating loan.

Programs

- ASPIRA is serving on the Walmart, City of Philadelphia and McDonald's scholarship committee. In fact we have almost taken over the McDonald's fund. We will be giving out 20 scholarships of \$1,000 in May.
- Aspirantes had their three-day Leadership Conference and are now planning a Youth Conference in May for all Aspirantes.
- Abriendo Caminos/CLC has begun their second semester. We will serve over 500 students this year.

Other Issues

- This will probably be my last official national Board meeting. I expect to be out on maternity leave for our August meeting. I will also begin transitioning myself out of ASPIRA at the end of the year to pursue other professional goals.

I want to thank all my ED colleagues and Board members for all their support during Pennsylvania's growing pains. It has truly been an honor to serve ASPIRA and I look forward to many other endeavors for our future.

Submitted by: María D. Quiñone-Sánchez, Executive Director



ASPIRA, Inc. of Pennsylvania

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215.229.1228 FAX 215.229.0966

Oscar Cardona
Board Chairperson
Maria D. Quiriones
Executive Director

Eugenio Maria De Hostos Bilingual Charter School

Fact Sheet

The Hostos Bilingual School will serve 120 students— 4th, 5th and 6th grader its first year and expands to 7th and 8th grade each year thereafter. Ninety percent of the students will come from the immediate Hunting Park Community and ten percent will come from a city-wide pool of applicants. Applicants will be drawn from an open lottery system. The Hostos School is expected to open in September of 1998.

The Hostos Bilingual School is a public school with high academic standards in a bilingual setting, with interdisciplinary teaching where the History of the Americas, music and visual arts are integral parts of the students everyday experience.

The Hostos Bilingual School will have a school uniform consisting of a white guayavera. Students will be served nutritious cultural dishes from Puerto Rico, the Caribbean and Africa in a fine dining room with teachers and staff.

Parents are expected to sign an "Accountability Contract" with the school that emphasizes the parents spending several hours a month in the school and their participation in specialized parent activities coordinated by the school.

All Dates are subject to change

Applications:	Open application process from April 1st
Students Eligible:	Any student entering the 4th, 5th or 6th grade
Enrollment:	After June 15th
Family Interviews:	July 15th through the summer
Teacher Recruitment:	Open application process from April 1st
Teacher Interviews:	May through June 30th
Teacher Selection:	July 15th
Location:	4300 North 5th Street (to be rehabbed)
Contact:	Maria D. Quiriones-Sanchez ASPIRA (215) 229-1226

Eugenio María de Hostos Community Bilingual Charter School

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ASPIRA, Inc. of Pennsylvania is pleased to submit the accompanying application for a charter school to be located within the School District of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. When notification was received that ASPIRA, Inc. of Pennsylvania was awarded a planning grant, it decided to create this innovative alternative educational concept. Thus, this application is being submitted in the name of ASPIRA Inc of Pennsylvania.

The mission of the Eugenio María de Hostos Community Bilingual Charter School (Hostos Charter School) is to promote excellence by providing middle level students a bilingual, bicultural academically enriched curriculum that draws from the social historical experience of Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans living in the United States. The Hostos Charter School will exist to counteract all suggestions that our children cannot or will not learn. It will be our young people's second home. A place where learning will be a challenge, not a chore, where students will be inspired to achieve and exploit their individual talents. The Hostos Charter School will be a community institution which brings to bear all the educational, social, and economic resources for the ultimate purpose of maximizing human potential.

The Hostos Charter School is the appropriate answer to the need for an alternative school in the community because it will be managed locally, with a small budget and personnel. The Hostos Charter School will maintain a low teacher-student ratio of 1:20; it will serve young people who are at risk of drop-out and failure, rather than concentrate only on the top achievers, as magnet schools do. The Hostos Charter School will provide adequate instructional and motivational alternatives, e.g., instruction in English and Spanish languages; its curriculum will be centered on problem solving about community issues and will be based on the standards developed by the School District of Philadelphia.

The Hostos Charter School's philosophy is grounded on the philosophy of Paulo Freire and John Dewey, educators who saw schools as agents of social change not as isolated institutions that serve children in a vacuum. Their teaching methods call for action within and outside the classroom. The expectation of parent participation in every aspect of school life will allow the school to impact not only on its students' lives, but also on their families. By participating in personal development programs, engaging in committee work, and learning along with their children, parents will become empowered to improve their community, look for solutions to chronic problems, and take effective action toward change.

The Hostos Charter School will serve students from fourth to eighth grade. It was widely felt that fourth grade represented a key stage for developing academic and social skills, self esteem and social consciousness. Founding members believed that the fourth grade year represented the stage where the Hostos Charter School could have a maximum impact on school attitudes and achievement and student engagement. In its opening year, 1998-1999, the Hostos Charter School will offer two sections each of fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, with an initial enrollment of 120 students. Each of the subsequent two years, two more sections of the next grade level will be added, with registration expected to increase by 40 students each year, leveling off at 200 students in 2000-2001.

The suggested boundaries for the target community that will be served by the Hostos Charter School are Ninth Street on the West, B Street on the East, Wingchocking Street on the North, and Erie Avenue on the South, within the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Some of the academic goals for the Hostos Charter School developed by the founding team are: to maintain high academic achievement, critical thinking, and critical teaching; to ensure that all students at their grade level, will be proficient in reading and writing across the curriculum; to ensure that students demonstrate the ability to express orally, written, and graphically — in English and Spanish — the concepts, application, and connection of mathematics to problem-solving processes; to promote interdisciplinary, project-based/community-oriented learning; and to accommodate a wide variety of students, from gifted and motivated to highly-at-risk, i.e., those who haven't functioned within traditional public school systems.

In addition, the Hostos Charter School aims to accomplish the following non-academic goals: to improve the use of technology in the Hostos Charter School; to develop partnerships with industry and business organizations that share the school's mission; to promote the revitalization of the community by empowering youth and adults for a direct role in and control of that revitalization; to implement personal development programs related to community leadership, improvement of personal effectiveness, and the creation of a family support system; to increase the budget over the per/pupil allowance by securing multi-year grants from local business and foundations; and to develop and preserve students' clear sense of cultural/ethnic identity.

The Hostos Charter School will be governed by a Board of Trustees that will have the authority to decide matters related to the operation of the school, including, but not limited to, fiscal management, curriculum planning and development, and operation and maintenance procedures. Members of the Board of Trustees will be selected from the community surrounding Hostos School. The Board of Trustees will be comprised of nine to fifteen members who represent a wide spectrum of the community, i.e., parents, administrators, and representatives of businesses, foundations, higher education institutions, and community organizations. ASPIRA will have designated seats on the Board. For the first three years, ASPIRA will designate chair and board members; afterwards, all members will be elected. Also, it is expected that by the third year 51% of the Board members will be parents elected by the community of stakeholders. The remaining 49% will be designated by ASPIRA. Board members will serve terms of 2 years each, with one third of the Board rotated every year.

Finally, the Hostos Charter School has developed a start-up budget as well as a preliminary budget for operating costs during the first year of operation. In meetings with the School District of Philadelphia, projected revenues will be based on actual student enrollment, student demographics, and actual location of the Hostos Charter School. The Hostos Charter School is projecting a start-up budget of \$250,000, with revenues generated from grant funds available from the Pennsylvania Department of Education as outlined in the Charter School Law, as well as from subsidies for primary educational facilities and grant funds from foundations and area businesses. For the first year's operating budget, per-pupil allocations are estimated at \$742,524. The Hostos Charter School expects to raise a substantial amount of money from foundations and businesses to match its academic objectives.

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

BOARD OF EDUCATION

21ST STREET S. OF THE PARKWAY

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19103-1099

FLOYD W. ALSTON
PRESIDENT

ROOM 109
TELEPHONE (215) 289-7799

February 12, 1998

Ms. Maria D. Quinones
Eugenio Maria DeHostos Community
Bilingual School
2726 North 6th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19133

Dear Ms. Quinones:

The Board of Education of School District of Philadelphia voted on February 9, 1998 to conditionally approve a charter for the proposed Eugenio Maria DeHostos Community Bilingual Charter School beginning in the 1998-99 school year. The conditions for the approval of your charter are explained in the attached board resolution passed unanimously by the Board on February 9, 1998.

Within the next two weeks, you will receive follow-up information from the School District administration about the chartering process.

On behalf of the Board of Education, allow me to congratulate you.

Sincerely



Floyd W. Alston
Board President

FWA/tmt

Enclosure

c: Honorable Eugene W. Hickok, Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Education

February 9, 1998

RESOLVED, That in accordance with The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Act 22 of 1997, the Board of Education of the School District of Philadelphia hereby grants a charter to the applicant, ASPIRA, Inc., to operate the public charter school to be known as **EUGENIO MARIA De ROSTOS COMMUNITY BILINGUAL CHARTER SCHOOL**, for the period beginning September 1, 1998 and ending August 31, 2002, provided that all the following conditions are met satisfactorily to the School District of Philadelphia:

- That the applicant submits by July 15, 1998, on forms to be supplied by the School District, evidence that at least 60 students have been registered to enroll in the charter school for the 1998-99 school year;
- That the applicant, if it has not already done so, provides the School District the following legal documentation no later than August 3, 1998:
 - Evidence that the charter school has been organized as a public nonprofit corporation in accordance with Section 1714-A of the authorizing legislation;
 - Evidence satisfactory to the General Counsel of the School District that the Board of Trustees of the charter school has been authorized to sign a written charter with the Philadelphia Board of Education;
 - A copy of the signed lease or deed for each facility providing classroom or other space to the charter school;
 - Current use and occupancy certificates for each facility leased or purchased for charter school purposes;
 - A duly signed Statement of Assurances as attached, including the commitment to administer the same student assessment tools as the District.
- That the applicant or Board of Trustees of the charter school, as the case may be, no later than August 3, 1998, and on forms to be provided by the School District, provide evidence that sufficient staff have been hired to serve the actual enrollment expected and that each member of the said staff who will have direct contact with students has procured complete criminal history and child abuse records checks as required by the authorizing legislation, Section 111 of The Public School Code, and 23 Pa. C.S. Ch. 68, subch. C.2.

No rights or obligations shall accrue pursuant to this Resolution before each of the foregoing conditions has been met as the Board of Education in its sole discretion shall determine.

The School District of Philadelphia

Statement of Assurances for
1998-99 Charter Schools

By duly authorized signature below, _____ (insert name of charter school) hereby agrees that the following terms and conditions will prevail for the duration of the charter, and understands that any material deviation from any of these terms and conditions is cause for revocation or nonrenewal of any charter that may be granted by the Philadelphia Board of Education at any time during the term of such charter:

1. The charter school will comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, and the authorizing legislation for charter schools.
2. The charter school will be nonsectarian in all operations.
3. The charter school will provide a minimum of one-hundred eighty (180) days of instruction and nine hundred (900) hours per year of instruction at the elementary level, or nine hundred ninety (990) hours per year of instruction at the secondary level.
4. Prior to employing any individual who shall have direct contact with students, the charter school shall ensure that criminal history and child abuse/injury records are obtained in compliance with §1-111 of the Public School Code and 23 Pa. C.S.A. subchapter C2, regarding background checks.
5. The charter school will provide the Philadelphia Board of Education with access to all of its records and facilities to ensure that the charter school is in compliance with its written charter.
6. The charter school will administer the School District's citywide academic assessments and set forth as a minimum performance standard the performance targets associated with the academic components of the District's professional responsibility system.
7. The charter school will not establish student admissions criteria that would discriminate on the basis of race, socio-economic status, English language proficiency, special education disability or academic achievement level.
8. The following legal documentation is submitted to the Philadelphia Board of Education no later than August 3, 1998:
 - evidence that the charter school itself has been organized as a public nonprofit corporation in accordance with Section 1714-A of Act 22 of 1997;
 - valid occupancy certificates for each facility serving the charter school's students;
 - a signed lease or deed for each facility serving the charter school's students.
 - sufficient staff with complete and appropriate criminal and child abuse records checks have been hired to serve the actual enrollment of the charter school; and
 - the charter school has obtained appropriate insurance coverage for errors and omissions (also known as professional liability insurance), property and general liability, automobile, and workers' compensation.
9. The charter school will comply with applicable special education guidelines as they may be amended from time to time.

Duly Authorized Signatory

Date

Typed Name and Title of Signatory